

## **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

### **Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A skeleton member structure comprising:

a skeleton member; and  
granular materials having hollow portions or being porous ~~granular materials~~,  
wherein a space inside the skeleton member and/or a space surrounded by the skeleton member and a surrounding panel member is filled with the granular materials.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): A skeleton member structure according to claim 1, wherein the granular materials are filled directly into the space surrounded by the skeleton member or into a filling member which is fitted into the skeleton member.

Claim 3 (Original): A skeleton member structure according to claim 1, wherein the skeleton member includes a plurality of frames, side sills, cross members, pillars, beams and rails, all being for use on an automobile.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): A skeleton member structure according to claim 1, wherein the granular materials are first granular materials and further comprising

second granular materials, adjacent ones of which are bonded to one another by the ~~hollow~~ first granular materials having hollow portions.

Claim 5 (Original): A skeleton member structure according to claim 4, wherein the first granular materials are made of a resin material.

Claim 6 (Original): A skeleton member structure according to claim 4, wherein the second granular materials are solid.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): A skeleton member structure according to claim 4, wherein the second granular materials ~~comprises~~comprise hollow or porous granular materials.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): A method for forming a solidified granular material filled in a skeleton member and/or in a ~~space~~space surrounded by the skeleton member and a surrounding panel member, the method comprising the steps of:  
mixing first granular materials which are hollow and made of a resin, with second granular materials; and

bonding adjacent ones of the second granular materials to one another via the first granular materials by melting surfaces of the first granular materials.